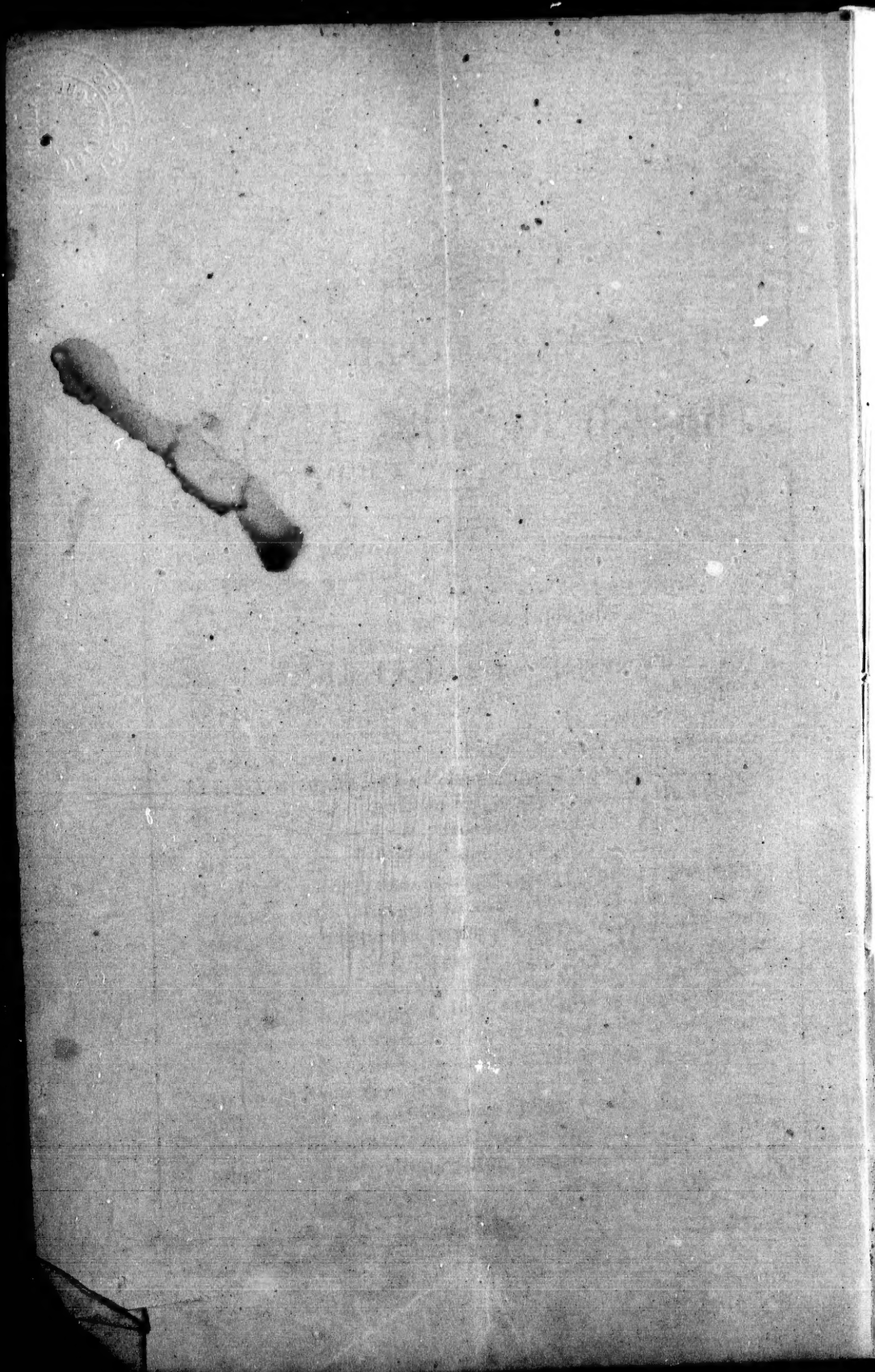


A LETTER
TO
THE RT. REV. DR. BINNEY
BISHOP OF NOVA SCOTIA ;
CONTAINING
OBSERVATIONS ON THE ORIGIN OF THE
SYNODICAL MOVEMENT,
AND A
DEFENCE OF THE POSITION AND ACTION OF ITS
OPPONENTS.

BY THE
REV. JAMES ROBERTSON, LL.D.
Rector of Wilmot.

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A LETTER

TO THE

BISHOP OF NOVA SCOTIA.

RT. REV. SIR,—

IF the charges, which the following extract from your letter to me of the 22nd January last, conveys against my Parish, were confined to the limits of a private correspondence, I would not have considered them deserving of any special notice. But several of my Reverend Brethren, whose assertion I cannot doubt, have assured me that at sundry times and in divers places, you have been in the habit of indulging in certain utterances against Wilmot, which as represented to me are highly derogatory to our position, and offensively so to our character as members of the Church of England in this Province. I have moreover been assured that the cause of such damaging remarks is to be found in our opposition to the Synodical movement, and in our indifference to the interests of the Diocesan Church Society; and that while other Parishes of more wealth and importance, entertaining similar views regarding the Synod, were passed over in silence, we have been singled out from the rest and honoured with special observations, which to say the least appear to have been characterised rather for their asperity than their justice. The reason of such distinction it is perhaps difficult to surmise, unless it may be supposed that in thus dealing with us you have acted on the well known principle that it is easy to pass over and trample the fence under foot where it is lowest.

Although I cannot perceive how the Synod or the Diocesan Church Society, being voluntary associations, can affect our position as members of a Church which existed before either, yet I think it due to my Parish and myself to publish this letter, in order to make the refutation of an unfounded calumny as well known as its assertion and reiteration, and to justify the attitude in which we are placed before our fellow-churchmen.

The serious charges in question are substantially comprehended in the extract from your letter, to which allusion is made above, and which reads as follows:—

“ I have to remind you that Wilmot is, in a great measure, separated from the body of the Church in this Province inasmuch as it repudiates the authority of the Synod, and virtually that of the Bishop. There was room for a charitable construction of their conduct, in this respect, when first the Synod was constituted, and the actual position of the Church in a colony was not understood by the multitude. But the objections then raised have since been refuted by the highest authorities”.....“and those who continue to oppose, because they objected when our position was not understood, and had not been authoritatively defined, as it has now been, are without excuse, while they persist in putting obstacles in the way of the free action and full development of the Church, to which they profess to adhere.”

These are serious charges, and challenge much and earnest consideration on account of the source from which they emanate. It is presumed that in all fairness they are applicable to all clergymen and congregations who have professed, and acted on their dissent from the Synodical movement; and that my poor Parish of Wilmot may be classed in the same category with other congregations which honourably share with us the same views and sentiments.

It will be my endeavour in the following pages to enquire with all the minuteness at my command into the nature and character of such charges, and if possible to discover the true source from which our present divided

position has really proceeded. In this enquiry I wish to avoid any expression or course of argument that might seem discourteous to yourself or derogatory to the functions, which are inalienable from your sacred office. At the same time I am bound, on account of the overwhelming interests which are involved in this question, to permit no feeling or sentiment of that description to interfere with the correct and faithful statement of the truth, as it successively presents itself to my mind, either in the perusal of the records of the past, or in specific deductions from the course of the discussion.

I will begin with the well understood fact, that the ecclesiastical laws of England are inoperative in this Province, and that we are neither restricted on the one hand, nor bound on the other by those enactments. Hence we are left to the guidance and protection of such laws and statutes as may have emanated from the generosity of Colonial Legislation. These we assume to be amply sufficient for the protection of our persons and property as members of a religious organization. More than this—more power, more indulgence, or greater immunities than those which are accorded to other denominations, we do not possess and can scarcely expect in a Province where all participate in an equal share of religious toleration and Christian liberty.

But this general legislation, embracing only a few well known constitutional principles cannot apply to the internal regulation and management of each separate religious community. Some rules or laws of a more minute and extended character appear to be necessary to supply an admitted exigency. Where then are we to look for guidance? How are we to supply the deficiency which is universally felt in the absence of legal enactments for the control and management of the internal affairs and measures of our special religious community? You imagine that this condition of cir-

cumstances is fully met by a Diocesan Synod. You think that a body of Churchmen, comprising the different orders of the clergy, and representatives of the laity; having legal authority to make special enactments, to control the refractory, to guide the hesitating, and to punish the offending; at the same time exercising if necessary judicial power, is an arrangement, which will ensure the free action and full development of our Church system.

Here, Rt. Rev. Sir, we differ. Whatever agreement may have hitherto occurred in our views, regarding the present unpromising position of our poor Church, is here interrupted by a clear and distinct divergence of opinion. Let it be clearly understood that I do not, and cannot, place any reliance on human laws, either for the eradication of evil or for the promotion of God's work in the hearts of his people. Neither can I conceive that any measure, or means, or institution, which needs threatening or compulsion for its successful application, can be conducive to the good of the Church or beneficial as an element of Church government.

Much rather, therefore, would I fall back on those scriptural principles, which all our Church divines acknowledge to be the true and solid foundation of protestant episcopacy. I would search out and adopt for our guidance in every possible emergency those broad and distinctive characteristics of our venerable system, which have in ancient times defended it from extinction amidst the fearful onslaughts of persecution, which enabled it to survive the convulsions of civil strife in modern days, and which still mark it out above its fellows as the beauty of holiness and the joy of the whole earth. These I would adopt as a general rule of guidance, leaving it to the discretion and wisdom of our chief pastor to render their application effective in every instance which demanded his attention; so that all things might "be done decently and in order."

In this letter I will endeavour to state and illustrate two of those leading characteristics to which reference has just been made, and which bear with singular aptitude on various points, which are prominently exhibited in the Synodical movement.

FIRST.—I will adduce convincing proof that the clergy of a diocese are entitled, in their collective capacity, to a voice in the general direction of diocesan transactions.

SECONDLY.—I will prove by reference to the practice of the primitive Church, and to the customs and rules of modern protestant episcopacy, that a bishop of that communion can only exercise a limited authority—that he is restricted from the exercise of a sole power.

As my leading arguments are chiefly dependent on these two principles, it will be necessary to establish their validity with a considerable degree of care and minuteness. And I indulge the hope that you will not deem it an irksome task to favour me with your earnest attention throughout the necessary details of the references and discussions.

I. That the clergy in their collective capacity are entitled to a voice in the general direction of diocesan transactions may be proved by reference to Scripture. In the first council of the Church on record, Acts xv., which was convened for the express purpose of deciding the question of circumcision before baptism, the ministers of the second order were associated with the apostles, who were of the first order, in the discussion and adjudication of that important matter. "The apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter" (ver. 6). Again (ver. 22), "Then it pleased the apostles and elders," with the concurrence of the whole Church, "to send chosen men of their own company." Here the apostles and elders seem to have conducted the discussion and pronounced the decision. Their decree was, moreover, of divine obligation. "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us," ver. 28.

May it not be inferred from these words that bishops and pastors are more assured of the Divine presence and direction, when convened together in Christ's name, than they could possibly feel each by himself in an isolated position; unless indeed it be assumed that God inspires one particular person with righteousness and holiness, forsaking others who are equally endowed with the outward appearance of the same desirable qualities?

Here, then, is an instance, a Scriptural instance of a Council or Synod, where the different orders of apostles and elders met for the consideration and decision of a most important question. The apostles doubtlessly were sufficiently inspired, and clothed with sufficient authority to decide the matter themselves, and to give advice to the Christians of Antioch, without any reference whatever to the opinion of the elders. But they refrained from assuming so onerous a responsibility without the assistance and co-operation of their fellow-labourers in the ministry of the word. Hence, we may infer, I think, without straining any terms or expressions, that the second order of ministers—presbyters or elders—possessed some inestimable right or privilege, which is not specifically defined in the sacred narrative, to hold a place in the council and to take part in its deliberations.

Now if these "things be written for our learning," we surely ought to receive this instance of an Apostolical Synod or Council as a certain example for our guidance. At all events as the question, which was then decided, seemed the admission of the Gentiles into the Christian fold without being subjected to the rite of circumcision, there seemed to be no immediate occasion for subsequent meetings of the same council. It is therefore the only one we read of in the sacred records.

But, as in the course of time points of doctrine and order began to give rise to different views and opinions among believers, Councils or Synods were convened in

various places for the purpose of discovering and recommending suitable measures for the promotion of peace and edification in the household of faith. In the age which immediately succeeded that of the apostles, we find but very few vague and incomplete marks of the times and occasions of convening Councils. From the death of St. John to the end of the second century the records, which have descended to the present time, are exceedingly limited, and convey only an incomplete view of the practice and discipline of the early Church during that adverse period. But from the fragments which the ancient Church historian, Eusebius, has preserved, we may readily infer that many councils were held, and that the presbyters as well as the bishops gave their attendance and their voices on all these occasions. —Cap. xvi., Lib. 5.

Here, however, it is necessary to discriminate. As the boundaries of the Church became extended, and its influence gradually diffused, it was necessary that Councils and Synods should also be in their operation and authority co-extensive with the progress of the Christian faith. Hence we meet with different kinds of councils. General Councils were composed of the most learned and eminent men, whom the Church produced from every part of the world. Their members were commonly though not always confined to the episcopal order. Provincial Councils or Synods were assembled from a less extent of territory, and appear to have been composed, like the Apostolical Council at Jerusalem, of bishops and pastors in their order. Of this character was the Synod held at Alexandria in the year 230, also that held at Bostra, in Arabia, in 243, according to Eusebius, Lib. vi., C. 33. In 252, Fabian, Bishop of Antioch, called a Provincial Synod of bishops and priests, who condemned Novatian for heresy. In all these the second order of clergy appear to have been fully represented, and to have been entrusted with an important share of the re-

sponsibility of discussing and adjudicating questions, which nearly affected the peace and prosperity of the Church at large.

A third species of council was the Diocesan Synod, which was always composed of the bishop and his clergy. Our accounts of such conventions in the third century, are full and satisfactory, and convey a very clear and well defined idea of the internal economy of Church government during that period. The works of Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, about the middle of the third century, are still extant, and shed a flood of light on the ecclesiastical matters which occupied his attention. He tells us himself (Epist. xliii., &c.) that he held seven Synods within the space of six years, from 250-256, and that in all these "he determined to do nothing without the advice of his clergy, and the consent of the people." Epist. xiv. Now mark this distinction. The people might hear and approve, but did not advise. In the words of Archbishop Potter: "For though it was an ancient custom for such of the people as were willing to come, to have free access to the councils and assemblies of the clergy, there is no example of their giving definitive voices there. And when their advice or consent was asked, this was understood to be done, that things might be carried on with unanimity, and not because their concurrence was believed necessary to give authority to anything that was decreed." Ch. Gov't, p. 316. These Diocesan Synods or Councils were of very frequent occurrence in all ages of the Church.

In his Chronology of History, Sir Harris Nicholas enumerates 1583 councils of all descriptions, of which any account or record has been preserved by ecclesiastical historians. These cover a period of 1400 years, from the assembling of the Council of Pargamos in A.D. 152, to the middle session of the Council of Trent in 1554. Of these seventeen were General Synods, embracing episcopal delegates from all parts of the Christian

world. The remaining 1566 were either Provincial or Diocesan Synods, where bishops and clergy met according to their respective orders, and determined such questions as came before them. But in no instance, in so far as I can discover, were the laity admitted to advise or to vote in those assemblies. This privilege appears to have been entirely confined to the bishops and clergy.

But protestant episcopacy seeks for precedents and examples, not in the Churches of Rome or Constantinople, but in the purest ages of antiquity, before philosophical subtleties and human fancies began to sap the foundation of the faith once delivered to the saints. In these modern days, and on this side of the Atlantic, we look to the practice and discipline of the English Reformers, in the same manner and with the same feelings of reverence, with which those great men viewed the faith and organization of the early Christian Church.

On turning to this source of reference then we find that the ancient customs in their general outline, constituted the pattern to which ecclesiastical proceedings were rendered conformable, and that the distinction between the clergy and laity in convocation or national Synod was rigidly observed. As a proof of this fact it may be stated that in the very first convocation held in England after the renunciation of the Pope's supremacy, the secretary, Thomas Cromwell, appeared as Vicar-General in place of the King, Hen. VIII., and took precedence of the Archbishop of Canterbury. On this unusual and unprecedented occurrence, Bishop Godwin, in his annals, p. 59, makes the following remark: "For an ignorant layman to preside in a Synod of the most learned bishops that ever were in England, was but a disgrace and a scandalous sight."

In the convocation which met in the first year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, it was ordered and passed that no act of importance in doctrine or discipline should

be final without the assent and concurrence of the Lower House of Convocation. Collier, vol. ii., 421. This fact seems to prove that the clergy, as a body, distinct from the House of Bishops, exercised an important share of power and authority in all matters which affected the well-being and prosperity of the Reformed Church.

After the accession of the Protestant Queen, the meetings of convocation became less frequent and regular. In truth, except on some extraordinary emergencies, their functions appear to have been superseded by acts of Parliaments and the supervision of the secular government. An act of this description empowered the Queen to constitute a High Commission Court, for the exercise of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, to which of course were to be referred the management and adjudication of all matters relating to Church government. Hence there seemed to be no occasion for calling together bishops and clergymen from all parts of the kingdom for the purpose of considering and discussing matters which were so easily and conveniently arranged by a permanent court, legally constituted for that express purpose.

During the Queen's reign the Provincial Synods of Canterbury and York met repeatedly and took an active part in the general control of all ecclesiastical matters. But I do not find that those two bodies ever transacted business under one roof, or met together in the capacity of a national Synod. In the reign of James I. we read that the convocation of Canterbury passed 141 canons for the government of the Church, which were collected by Bishop Bancroft out of the articles, injunctions and synodal acts of previous reigns. These canons form the foundation of the ecclesiastical constitution of 1663, after the Restoration.

But it is not my object to trace the history and proceedings of this memorable body. Suffice it to say that since the reign of Queen Ann down to a very recent period its functions were dormant; not apparently from

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any want of a resuscitating power, but from the general condition of the country, and from the peculiar tone of religious sentiment, which pervaded and influenced every rank and class of society in the nation throughout the eighteenth century. When it last assembled, in 1714,* it consisted of all the bishops who formed the upper house, of all deans and archdeacons, of one proctor for every chapter and two for the clergy of every diocese, in all 143 clergymen, who constituted the lower house. No layman was eligible to perform any part of its functions. Even the very messengers were in orders.

Of Diocesan Synods I do not find one instance since the Reformation, except the futile attempt which the Bishop of Exeter made some years ago to convoke a Synod in his diocese, for the purpose of deciding the question of baptismal regeneration! The severe reproof which some of the secular peers administered to him in their place in Parliament, and the general sentiment of the nation at large, in reference to such matters, have hitherto prevented his lordship from repeating the experiment, and may possibly have had the effect of deterring others from following so useless and pernicious an example. In fact such Synods are, by 25 Hen. VIII., illegal, unless convened by Royal authority.

Now from the foregoing observations, showing the practice and constitution of Synods, or ecclesiastical councils in the early ages of the Church, as also their nature and character as recognized in the Reformed Church of England, I think that I am justified in deducing the following important facts or inferences:

1. That at all Synods and Councils of a Provincial or Diocesan character the clergy of the second order were present:—

2. That on all occasions they assisted in the decision and adjudication of important questions, which deeply concerned the doctrine and discipline of the Church.

3. And that, therefore, the clergy of a Diocese are entitled, in their collective capacity, to a voice in the general direction of important Diocesan transactions.

A further inference from the same premises may here be noted,—an inference which every candid mind will readily admit,—and which may be considered in the light of a corollary. It is—that the laity were not permitted to enjoy the privilege of voting, either in ancient or modern church assemblies, on questions of an ecclesiastical character. Indeed in the Synods or convocations of the Church of England, the opinions or views of laymen do not seem to have challenged any available consideration.

Having I trust made this point clear and intelligible. I will now with your leave proceed to illustrate and fortify the second proposition which I selected for discussion, and which may thus be enunciated :

II. That a protestant Bishop, according to the fundamental principles of his own Church, can only exercise a limited authority, being in various ways restricted from using a *sole* power.

To those who know how the episcopal power in England is protected on the one hand, and restricted on the other, by a vast amount of national legislation, this proposition will be self-evident. There the path of episcopal procedure is extremely narrow ; and a Bishop requires to be in constant communication with professional legal advisers to keep him in the strict path of legality. On this side of the Atlantic, however, much more latitude of action may be assumed and practised without trenching on the doubtful boundaries of certain enactments. It will be my purpose in the following remarks to prove that, even here, there are limits beyond which episcopal authority cannot be either fairly or constitutionally exercised, and that these limits are necessarily suggested by the fundamental principles of protestant episcopacy.

In the whole range of Christian antiquity, I cannot recall a single instance where a Bishop acted on his own authority regarding any matter which concerned the interest of the Church in his Diocese. The early believers were probably guided, in all cases, where collision of individual views or vain disputations occasioned doubt or hesitation, by the well known precept of our Saviour, Matt. xviii. 15—20, a precept which effectually precluded the exercise of a sole power or authority by any one person, be he apostle or disciple, within the borders of the new kingdom. "Tell it unto the Church"—is a command which necessitates an appeal to many, not to one for justice, judgment, and peace. And the assurance is given that, when the Church came together to discuss and determine differences among their members, Christ himself by his spirit should be there in the midst of them.

Conformable to these injunctions was the practice of the early believers. During the first three centuries, I believe there is not an instance on record to justify the opinion that any of the first Bishops exercised in cases of discipline a sole power. In truth the general character of their proceedings, and the tone of Christian sentiment, which animated and pervaded every portion of the household of faith during the early struggles of the Church, all point in quite an opposite direction. The utmost tenderness and consideration, the most expansive charity and loving-kindness appear to have characterised all the dealings of these men one with another. So fully conscious was Dr. Cava of the reality and force of those truths that he becomes impressively eloquent when depicting the beneficial influence and charm of such virtues. See Prim. Christi. Part III. Cap. I. & II. "Even Bishops and Pastors were so powerfully actuated by all the Christian graces, that they were temperate and moderate in all things; esteeming each other better than themselves for their

Master's sake." It is not at all probable that such men would arrogate to themselves an undue share of power or authority. It is much more likely that, amidst the difficulties which surrounded them, and the various errors, which then disturbed many of their flocks, great caution and forbearance would have been manifested, and that much reluctance would have been felt by any Bishop in incurring the responsibility of exercising on his own account any power or authority which might isolate him from the communion of his brethren.

Hence we must examine the history of later and less pure ages for the undisguised exercise of the sole power. After Rome had arrogated and secured to itself a concentrated spiritual authority it claimed the excessive privilege of not only giving laws to Christendom, but also of executing those laws without the least reference to the governing civil powers of any country. Such proceedings implied not only the exercise of the power sole, but in England implied subjection or submission to a foreign supremacy in its most repulsive and unmitigated form. The spiritual authority thus became gradually powerful enough to over-rule the temporal, in all kingdoms and nations who professed to receive their religious training from Rome, and to adhere to her selfish and aggrandising system. Hence arose, in England more especially, that universal spirit of discontent and sense of oppression which subsequently led to the Reformation, and to the encouragement of true religious sentiment in the land.

It was jealousy of the exercise of this sole power which created the very first feeling of distrust and alienation in the ranks of the English Reformers. For the first ten years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, there was not a single dissenter in all England. Every grade of the clergy and laity within the Reformed Church rejoiced in the blessings which they recently obtained, and concurred with singular unanimity in the adoption generally

of the reformed liturgy. But soon jealousies began to arise, and to exhibit themselves in various ways, and in different quarters. Controversies arose on every side; the most learned and eminent men of the age took part in those discussions; gradually the lines of demarcation became more distinct, until at length the opponents and supporters of the reformed episcopacy were fairly arranged into two separate and different bodies.

Although the rubrics of the prayer book impliedly repudiated the exercise of the sole power in the ordination offices, by ordering that more than one bishop should be present at the consecration service, and that priests present should assist the bishop in the ordination of ministers, yet the declaimers against the sole power were determined not to be satisfied. A pamphlet full of bitterness and asperity was published anonymously under the title of "An Admonition to Bishops." This was answered by Archbishop Whitgift in 1573, with great power and clearness. He disclaims all intention and wish to exercise a sole power in the Church. "We give no greater authority to either archbishop or bishop, than the consul or prætor had among the Romans; or a master and president in a college, who have not and cannot have the sole authority of government lodged in their persons." The archbishop's answer is a medium sized old octavo volume, and the foregoing words are found on page 396.

Still the controversy continued. It was sustained on the presbyterian side by Travers and Cartwright, and on the side of the establishment by Hooker, Downham, Morton and Field. Then came the Baxters, the Owens, the Hendersons and the Reynolds, uttering invectives and oburgations against the episcopal establishment, and gathering after them an immense following from all ranks and classes of society. The results are matters of history. The throne was overturned; the establishment trampled in the dust. Now the supporters of the epis-

copacy throughout the whole of this great national controversy deny the assumption of any *sole* power by the protestant bishops. Mr. Chillingworth, who seems to have uttered the sentiments of the Church party in general, thus speaks in his *Demonstration of the Apostolic Institution of Episcopacy*, p. 323: "If we abstract from episcopal government all accidentals, and consider only what is essential and necessary to it, we shall find in it no more but this: an appointment of one man of eminent sanctity and sufficiency, to have the care of all the churches within a certain precinct or diocese, and furnishing him with authority not *absolute* and *arbitrary*, but regulated and bounded by laws, and moderated by joining to him a convenient number of assistants."

But it is needless to pursue this subject. Even King James I., in his *Basilicon Doron*, and Charles I., in his *Eikon Basilicon*, both deny and repudiate the exercise of a sole or arbitrary authority in matters spiritual. The religious character and disposition of both those monarchs are set forth and discussed at large in Archdeacon Echard's introduction to the Jesuit d'Orlean's "*History of the English Revolutions*."

In those times of excitement and distraction, the contention was for the mastery. The object of the strife was to obtain the ascendancy in Church and State, irrespectively of all other considerations whatsoever. And whatever party triumphed for the time being considered it as one of their most important duties to punish and ruin their less fortunate rivals.

It would be tedious, Rt. Rev. Sir, and might be thought irrelevant to the matter under discussion to follow the different phases which the great national controversy assumed in Scotland. It will be sufficient for my present object if I briefly touch on a few of the leading points.

In no part of the Christian world was the controversy between episcopacy and presbyterianism carried on with more keenness and acrimony than in Scotland. It ap-

appears to have acquired an intensity of feeling in proportion to the contracted sphere of its operations. On the presbyterian side were ranged Knox, the Melvilles, Gillespie, Rutherford, Calderwood, Dr. Rule, and a host of minor lights. This party obtained vast popularity by classifying prelacy and popery in the same category. And all the worst features of the Romish, were industriously attributed to protestant episcopacy. Among these objectionable attributes, the sole power or authority, supposed to be exercised by the bishop to the prejudice and destruction of the national liberty, was brought forward and illustrated with much prominence. On the episcopal side we find the names of William Cowper, the learned Bishop of Galloway, Peter Hay, gentleman, Archbishop Spotswood, Bishop Lindesay, Dr. Forbes, of Corse, Dr. Maxwell, of Ross, Archdeacon Logie, of Aberdeen, Bishop Honyman, of Orkney, and Dr. Burnet, before he left Glasgow. All these, without exception, in their refutation of the presbyterian allegations, renounce the exercise of a sole power, and point out very clearly the chief distinction between popery and reformed episcopacy. Bishop Forbes, of Corse, expresses himself on this point in these majestic sentences: "Quando antem supremum in hierarchia ecclesiastica locum episcopis vindicamus, contra injustam usurpationem Romani Pontificis, non excludimus presbyteros ab ecclesiae gubernatione; nec episcopo in sua diocesi potestatem tribuimus *autokratoriken*, neque authoritatem *despotiken*, vel absolutam aliquam concedimus monarchiam: Nam accedimus iudicis catholicæ antiquitatis quæ cum episcopo in regenda ecclesia conjungit presbyterium." Or, "When we claim the supreme place in the ecclesiastical hierarchy for bishops, against the unjust usurpation of the Roman Pontiff, we do not exclude presbyters from the government of the Church; nor do we accord to a bishop in his own diocese a sole-judging power, a despotic authority, or any absolute sovereignty. For we acquiesce in the

judgment of catholic antiquity, which joins the presbytery with the bishop in regulating or governing the Church."—*Instructiones Historico—Theologicæ Lib. xvi., cap. i., § 12.*

The state of religion and religious controversy was such in the early part of the reign of Charles I., that the ministers of that sovereign imagined that differences might be allayed and peace promoted in the Church by a plan of amalgamation. It was thought that by a few unimportant concessions on both sides a common platform might be established on which the episcopalian and presbyterian elements would find room enough to work in harmony for the benefit of the nation at large. Royal instructions were consequently issued for convening an assembly at Glasgow in 1638, at which the bishops were summoned to be present. Advantage, however, was taken of the popular feeling against episcopacy, and circumstances were so arranged as to make it impossible for the bishops to appear in the Synod without compromising their feelings of self-respect as well as their personal safety. They strongly protested against the measures which had been adopted for their annoyance and humiliation, and left the assembly to its fate.

^{ac} The second exception in their protest is as follows: "Because the assembly consists of great numbers of the laity, who are allowed a decisive vote no less than the clergy; whereas such persons are legally disabled from acting under such a character." This protest is signed by six bishops, namely: those of St. Andrews, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Galloway, Ross, and Brechin.—*Collier ii., 784.*

The unexpected result which attended these proceedings dissipated every hope of amalgamating and fusing together the episcopalian and presbyterian principles of Church government, and of combining their mutual excellencies for the good of the whole nation. And ac-

cordingly the attempt, in so far as I can discover, has never since been renewed.

You will excuse, I trust, these references to historical events, and concede the well understood fact, that for the divine and the statesman the voice of history is the voice of wisdom ; that in this manner the present generation is instructed by the experience of the past, and that the historical page presents to us the footsteps of Divine Providence treading among the nations of the earth.

Now, I think I may claim to have proved in the foregoing observations the second proposition which I have above enunciated, namely : that a protestant bishop cannot, according to the principles of his own Church, exercise a sole power or authority in matters pertaining to discipline. The practice of antiquity, the constitution and laws of the Church of England, and the uniform discipline of the Episcopal Church in Scotland, tend to confirm and establish this important position.

The next thing to which I shall beg leave to call your attention, is the manner in which these two acknowledged principles of episcopacy, namely : the right of presbyters to be consulted in all important matters bearing on Church discipline, and the limited character of protestant episcopal authority, have been overlooked and disregarded by you in the initiatory measures which you were pleased to adopt for the formation of the Diocesan Synod of Nova Scotia.

On the 10th of August, 1854, as I find by my journal, I received a notice from you, dated the 4th of the same month, enjoining me to call meetings of my congregations for the purpose of electing two lay delegates, whom, with myself, you requested to attend at Halifax on the 11th of October following, in order to consider the expediency of constituting a Diocesan Assembly or Synod for this Diocese. I confess to you that on reading this order my emotions were of the most painful character.

I felt at once that a rude hand had swept across the fair but fragile form of our youthful Zion ; that a desperate violence had been offered to her well balanced organization ; and that her principles and experience had been alike slighted and overlooked.

This singular and unprecedented order involves infractions of a most serious character against the rights and privileges of your clergy and the discipline of the Church of our affections.

1. By assuming to yourself the *sole* authority of commanding the attendance of the laity, you deprived your clergy of that privilege of voting with you on all matters of discipline, which the custom of antiquity and the present constitution of the mother Church establish as our rightful inheritance. Without once consulting us in our collective capacity, you resolved by your own mere motion to introduce a most startling change into our organized system. Have we not a right to complain that we have thus been surreptitiously defrauded of our professional immunities, and at your bidding actually made instrumental in the process of our own degradation.

What rendered the process doubly offensive was the fact, which, no doubt, was meant by you to have its due effect,—the fact that there were at the meeting *two* laymen for every clergyman. Consequently if any Rev. brother attempted to assert the right and privilege under discussion, he would at once have been outvoted. Supposing that the Lt.-Governor of this Province, or any other Lt.-Governor similarly situated, had ordered on his own mere motion the different sections of the country to elect at once *two* members to attend the session of the Legislative Council for every *one* of the present members ; and supposing further, that he should preside at the first meeting in person, to see that the votes of the new comers were duly recorded—what would be the effect on the legitimate members of that body, or what

would constitutional jurists say? I fancy I perceive their astonished looks and elongated faces. His excellency would have raised such a storm about his head as would give him painful recollections for the rest of his life. And yet such direct violence offered the constitution of the Province, in the case supposed, cannot and does not surpass in the measure of its arbitrary despotism the act of wrongful oppression with which you initiated the Synodical movement. We had just as good a right as yourself to be consulted about that great change in our discipline, which contemplates the admission and voting of the laity, in our Church assemblies. And when you overlooked this important step at the first origin of your Synodical project, you deprived us of our rights, despised our privileges, and cast disrespect and dishonour on our order. You committed a grievous wrong, which you can neither recall nor redress.

2. Again, you have transgressed that principle of our Church which denies to any of its bishops a sole power or authority. It has been already proved that the arbitrary extent of authority was repudiated by the ancient Church as well as by protestant episcopacy. It does not exist in Great Britain. Supposing the Archbishop of Canterbury assumed, without consulting any of his brethren, the sole responsibility of issuing to the clergy of his province an order similar to that which we received in August, 1854, what may we suppose would be the effect? Such an illegal and unconstitutional mandate would be universally disregarded, and it is very probable that his Grace would receive more than a severe reprimand for his pains. And yet, in this poor Province, so far removed from the centre of government, you feel no hesitation, it appears, in doing violence to the well understood principles of our Church, simply, I presume, because you are not restrained by law. At all events you have convinced some of your clergy that no portion of the external order of our Zion is exempt from the

danger of change and innovation whenever it may seem good to you to alter the present arrangement. The exercise of the sole authority in each and all of these particulars will leave the whole responsibility with you.

3. Further, the admission of the laity in the proportion of two to one into our deliberative meetings or visitations for the purpose of voting, is an innovation as startling as it is non-episcopal. Episcopacy, in the protestant acceptation of the term, has passed through many severe ordeals, both in the ancient and the latter ages, and has not unfrequently been thought to be but ill-fitted as a system to present truth to the world, or to preserve it intact from error. Yet I believe none of the most strenuous advocates and supporters of that system ever contemplated the possibility of improving its general usefulness, or of insuring its integrity by any proposal to open its portals more widely for the admission of lay influence in its deliberative assemblies. Even the Long Parliament, when they petitioned the King, Chas. I. (in November, 1648, at Carisbrook, just two months before his execution), for certain modifications in the Book of Common Prayer, and in the character or privileges of the established Church—even that dominant body did not venture so far in their demands as to ask for the admission of the laity into the Synods or convocations of the establishment. Whatever may have been their views regarding the application of episcopacy to the condition of the nation, as a means of religious and moral improvement, yet they seem never to have thought of developing its practical utility by the sacrifice of any principle or axiom of its theoretical construction. The ancient theory of the whole system was still sacred in their eyes; although we, who only read of the animus which guided their movements, might have inferred from concurrent circumstances that their demands would have been more unreasonable, if not directly subversive of the whole venerable fabric.

But it now appears that an innovation, from which even the opponents of episcopacy shrunk in times of national trouble and disaster, is proposed and practised in times of peace and national prosperity by its friends, supporters and administrators; and all this on the single plea of developing our system! Developing our system indeed! It looks much more like changing or abolishing it.

What would be the effect of a similar development if applied by the sole power of the president to the present condition of the Methodist conference? Would all the members of that body be likely to accede to the proposal, and acquiesce without a murmur in so glaring and fundamental an innovation? I trow not. For this question has already caused much difference of sentiment in the Methodist body both in England and elsewhere, and may yet lead to most important consequences. And whoever would imagine that a question, which involves the very character and stability of the episcopal system, could be finally settled without opposition and conscientious convictions openly expressed, only betrays his ignorance of our common nature, or woefully undervalues the earnestness and tenacity with which Episcopalians cling to the religion of their fathers.

Let it not be supposed, however, from this line of argument that I am in the least degree averse to the due exercise and weight of lay influence in the temporal affairs of our Church. On the contrary, I am most desirous that this influence should be brought to bear in its most practical shape on the management and progress of all our common measures. But I submit that in Nova Scotia more especially, this object is fully secured by the law which regulates the proceedings of our parish corporations, and which virtually places the whole power and authority parochial in the hands of the congregation. They may place one of their own number in the chair and transact business in the absence of the Rector,—an

amount of authority which the law regulating the proceedings of other denominations, does not recognise. I am very willing that our people should always enjoy this amount of control in parish matters; and when I demur to its extension to our collective and deliberate assemblies, I only insist on the propriety, and in fact the necessity, of preserving our Church in the same degree of beauty and integrity, in which it has been handed down to us throughout many generations. In reality the Synod as now constituted under your sole power and authority is only a clumsy and most expensive imitation of the presbyterian system.

Now, Rt. Rev. Sir, I have brought forward above, and proved from history and the opinions of learned Divines, three distinct instances of departure from our well known and venerable system, with which you are personally chargeable. First of all you deprived your clergy of their rights and privileges, which are inseparable from their sacred office by deciding without their presence or consent on a most important change in our system of Church government. Secondly, you violated the spirit and character of protestant and primitive episcopacy by arrogating to yourself a sole power in such matters,—a power which neither ecclesiastically nor constitutionally belonged to you. And thirdly, you have changed and assimilated to presbyterianism that scriptural and well balanced episcopacy which our forefathers established in the mother country at the Reformation. It would be unbecoming in me to enquire into the motives which thus misled you from the clear path of your duty. These are between your own conscience and your God. There let them rest. But one thing is very sure. You have introduced into our hitherto peaceful communion elements of strife and contention, whose consequences cannot now be easily estimated. You have acted in direct opposition to the terms of your solemn promise at your consecration—"to set

forward as much as shall lie in you, quietness, love, and peace among all men." And what is worse than all you have destroyed the beauty and integrity of our beloved Church.

I am fully sensible of the unfavourable character of these charges, and of the sinister light in which they place your proceedings before the episcopal public of this Province. But be pleased to remember that in this as in many other cases you are the aggressor. You told me that my Parish "is in a great measure separated from the body of the Church in this Province, inasmuch as it repudiates the authority of the Synod." The correctness of this imputation I positively deny. We are not separated from the body of the Church. We are exactly, in point of doctrine and discipline, where we were thirty-five years ago. Thus much I can most solemnly testify. And if any separation has unfortunately taken place in the matter you are not only responsible for this evil, but also the actual perpetrator of it. You have gone aside from following the principles of our pure apostolic system.

In former times—in the days for instance of Chrysostom—you would have been subject to deposition for this delinquency, and left to offer the best justification in your power for so flagrant an attempt to produce schism in the body of Christ.

Against the course of argument which has been pursued in the foregoing remarks, and which is based on the fundamental principles of our Church, no case of expediency ought for a moment to be admitted. For any reason or argument that might be adduced for altering or changing our foundation might be converted by ingenious subtlety, into a cause for abolishing our system altogether, as being wholly inapplicable to the circumstances and inevitable condition of colonial society. You surely are not prepared for this contingency. Or am I wrong in supposing that this could not have been the object of your mission across the Atlantic?

Hence I conceive that the arguments which are stated in your "Remarks on Diocesan Synods," and which more or less bear on their very surface the marks of expediency, can have little or no weight in deciding this important question. You there state, page 7, "Synods are part of the constitution of the Church, and were regularly held in the early ages." In this one sentence there is an amount of sophistry, which derogates much from its weight and application to our present condition. From reading it we are expected or rather led to infer that the ancient Synods, which constitutionally characterized the episcopal system, were of the same nature and composition, were convened for the same objects and at the same regular intervals as the Synod of Nova Scotia. This much is not said. It is merely implied, and, by the most subtle species of sophistry, is left to produce an incorrect impression on the mind of the reader.

That the ancient Synods form a precedent or pattern for that of Nova Scotia is a most transparent fallacy. All meetings of this character of which we read in the primitive Church historians, were convened for some specific object, to settle doubts about some points of doctrine, or to judge and decide on some case of heretical teaching. The Nova Scotia Synod meets regularly every two years for the supervision of the general affairs of the Diocese. The ancient Synods met to decide on the reception of lapsed penitents and the rejection of the hesitating and the doubtful. That of this Province meets for the purpose of "adapting ourselves to the circumstances of a new country, and of this progressive age." The ancient Synods in their deliberative capacity were composed of only bishops and presbyters. That of Nova Scotia contains twice as many laymen, bearing votes, as there are clergy.

Now, Rt. Rev. Sir, I have made diligent enquiry into this question, and consider myself in a position to

challenge you publicly to bring forward *one* instance from the early records of the Church to prove that a meeting or meetings similar in every respect to the Nova Scotia Synod,—having the same objects in view, composed of the same classes of persons, ever assembled or were called together in primitive times. In so far as I am aware you cannot find one. Indeed you concede as much in the notes at p. 4 of your pamphlet. The quotations from Collier and Burns on the same page seem to be decisive on this point. For neither of these high authorities makes mention of the presence of the laity. And your remark at the foot of p. 4 convinces me that you have not up to this moment fully realized the immeasurable difference, which the absence or presence of the laity in our deliberative assemblies, is calculated to effect, in the nature and character of our apostolical Church. You there state in the most cursory manner. “In the Synods as they are now restored, the laity have a voice, but I presume the propriety of this addition to the original constitution is generally admitted.”

No, Rt. Rev. Sir, it is not generally admitted. At all events there are many in the western section of your Diocese who will oppose it to the last, as a dangerous innovation. Indeed I do not know a better exemplification of Dr. Newman’s doctrine of development as illustrated in one of the “Tracts for the Times.” The argument of “general admission,” is a Roman Catholic doctrine, and is put forward as a cause for changing or adding to the fundamental truths of our holy faith. It ought not, therefore, to find any place in reformed theology. And if our Church system, “in consequence of our peculiar position as an unestablished branch of a Church established in England,” admits of fundamental changes on the mere motion and sole judgment of any of its Bishops, then it may be assumed as an incontrovertible fact, that it is not, and cannot be adapted to

"the circumstances of this progressive age." If you change it, you may abolish it; or rather you admit the fact, that others may change it and alter it, so that our children of the fourth generation cannot find in it any trace or mark of our reformed episcopacy.

But surely no sound Churchman will admit that a principle which may ultimately lead to the total subversion of our ecclesiastical system, can be sound or beneficial under any circumstances. It is the peculiar excellence of reformed episcopacy that it has not only restored the doctrine and discipline of the first and purest ages of the Gospel, but has also retained them in their full integrity for upwards of three hundred years; whilst other denominations have during the same period introduced many modifications and changes in both. It has been reserved for the synodical movement and its supporters to make the first inroad upon the symmetry of our scriptural order, to lay unholy hands upon the ark of our covenant, and to despoil it of its beauty forever.

I can find no example in early Christian literature to justify your assertion that such synods as you are attempting to force upon us "are part of the constitution of the Church, and were regularly held in the early ages." If in these words you refer to the xxxvii. of the Apostolical Canons,* in which it is enjoined that a synod of bishops be held twice a year, then I must say that the reference is extremely disingenuous; inasmuch as the object of such synods was to examine articles of faith, and to remove causes of controversy. Neither presbyter nor layman had any decisive voice in those synods. Or again, if you refer to the Canons of Theodore the 4th, Archbishop of Canterbury in 673, which enjoin, like those of apostolic origin, that "a synod be assembled twice in the year,"† or to those of Archbp.

* Beverege's Canons. Vol. I., p. 25.

† Johnson's Canons. Vol. I., Anno 673.

Lanfranc, which were adopted at Winchester in 1071, and which established a synod in every diocese to meet once a year, I must repeat that the reference here is equally inapplicable, and displays an equal degree of unfairness. From such synods the laity were scrupulously excluded. The object of their meeting was altogether different from that which the Nova Scotia synod proposes to subserve. And if it were otherwise, I question much whether the English synods or the mode of conducting them before the Reformation ought to be admitted as an example to us who hold to a reformed episcopacy. Some years ago a gentleman of the name of Ward was expelled from the University of Oxford because among other strange dogmas he maintained in his "Ideal of a Christian Church" that the Reformation was a misfortune, and that the customs of the pre-reformed church ought still to prevail. I hope that you do not mean to subject yourself to the same measure of reprehension by proposing to the churchmen of this diocese to follow so pernicious an example as the synods of the middle ages.

The truth is that in this reference to ancient practice for a justification of the synodical movement, you have pursued a course of reasoning which is extremely unfair, and is altogether unworthy of your position. It is calculated to mislead the clergy and people of your diocese in matters of the greatest importance; and for this reason, if for no other, the scheme of church government which you seek to raise on so fallacious a foundation cannot be otherwise than detrimental to the best interests of episcopacy in Nova Scotia.

You appear to censure my parish and myself, because whatever objections may have been urged against the movement in its inception have "now been refuted by the highest authorities." Here I must ask leave to differ from you. No authority, high or low, can possibly refute the objections which are above substantiated

against your own proceedings. You acted with rashness and violence in assuming the sole power ; you treated your clergy with injustice and disrespect by declining to consult them before calling the general meetings ; and you have overturned our church system by introducing innovations which neither we nor our fathers knew. What authority, let me respectfully inquire, can refute these objections ? Or how can *the facts*, which are undenied and undeniable, be palliated or excused ? I am very sure that legislation will not improve the position.

Besides, in so far as I am aware, all the decisions of the highest authorities on the subject of colonial episcopacy do not certainly countenance such projects of despotism and compulsion as you seem to entertain in reference to synodical action in this province. For the case of Mr. Long proves that you cannot compel the attendance of any clergyman, however humble his position at the meetings. The letter of the late Duke of Newcastle to colonial governors in favor of the recognition of synods as representing the church, only prove that a serious difference may exist in your diocese on this very point with the express permission of the law, as decided by the Lord High Chancellor of England. Our colonial statute is altogether of a voluntary character, and cannot fairly be adduced by you or any other man as a *test* of churchmanship. And the unexpected decision of Lord Westbury in the case of Bishop Colenso proves that your own letters-patent are not only valueless as conferring compulsory powers, but even unconstitutional in a province like this.

In all these proceedings and decisions I do not perceive the least approach to a refutation of the objections which have been urged here and elsewhere against the synodical movement. Rather, in my humble opinion, do they confirm and strengthen our arguments. For they all more or less directly point to the following undeniable and self-evident propositions :

1. That in this province we are neither restricted nor protected by the ecclesiastical laws of England.

2. That no religious despotism can be exercised in any colony of the British Empire, because of letters-patent from the Queen : and

3. That the voluntary principle must be admitted and recognized as a fundamental axiom in our Church system.

Under these circumstances, what is the wisest course to pursue? Say you : give us compulsory laws,—give us a synod to whose views “the courts of law will give effect with reference to its members;” and then you seem to imagine that all things would work together for good to our Church. Here we differ *toto calo*. The present crisis in our transitive state calls loudly for the assertion and recognition of those ancient distinctive principles which have characterized pure and scriptural episcopacy throughout all ages. Care should be taken that the religious and purely ecclesiastical elements should be cultivated and well understood. Let us fall back upon these simple and immovable principles when other guides are inoperative or withdrawn. Let us cherish the religious sentiment as the pearl of great price, the distinguishing feature of our system. Let all exterior arrangement be made subservient to the promotion and inculcation of this leading object. And more especially let us avoid the folly of proclaiming to the world, as you seem to delight to do, that our reformed episcopacy is inadequate to the teaching of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, without the sanction of human laws. The very course which you are pursuing, the exhibition with which you favored the public in the Council Chamber in 1863, prove to the world at large that you have no faith in the grace of consecration,—that you do not rely with implicit confidence on the Saviour’s promise, and that you imagine our system and our teaching to be incomplete as a means of salvation,

without the intervention of human legislation. The inferences which are thus deducible from your actions, and which are clearly perceived by shrewd men of other denominations, are highly detrimental to the successful progress of our Church; inasmuch as an argument is thus placed in the hands of those who do not love our Zion, against its spiritual character and its scriptural efficiency as a means of grace and salvation.

It does not become me as a presbyter to prescribe or point out to you as my bishop any line of duty or course of action. But, if I might suggest anything that would seem worthy of your attention, I would say: Let the Bishop go more frequently and more unreservedly among his people; let him hold promiscuous meetings of clergy and laity in different sections of his diocese; let Church matters be fully and fairly discussed at such reunions; let opinions be expressed and advice given; and let all be done with the sole object of building up our Zion in faith, unity and love, to the glory of God and the salvation of souls—let all this be done with brotherly kindness and charity, without vote or controversy, and I will venture to predict that in a few years more good, more peace, more prosperity will be experienced than could be produced by one hundred synods. For we as a people are extremely jealous of any measures or men that may threaten in the remotest degree to restrict our Christian liberty. But we reverence and love those who anxiously and diligently instruct us in the ways of truth and godliness.

Whilst such modes of proceeding are in perfect accordance with all the details of the episcopal system, and are also more promising in their results, I cannot really perceive the absolute necessity of a *legal* assembly for regulating the affairs of our communion.

And what, after all, has the Church Assembly or Synod as yet effected for the good of our holy cause? What case has it decided, what mission has it opened,

what measure of peace, progress or prosperity has it accomplished? It has now been in operation twelve years, and in so far as useful results are concerned it may be compared to a very expensive establishment, without any object to subserve. Indeed, I will venture to say that if it had all the provincial and imperial sanctions which have been challenged for it, its functions would still remain in a manner dormant; at least in so far as its provisions might apply to the "offending clergy." For it is a certain fact that in this province an offending clergyman would be condemned before he came under the cognizance of the Synod; and no vote or whitewashing of that body would again render him acceptable to his people. *Ergo cui bono?*

You tell me that the mission of Wilmot will be closed after my removal. Whether a future rector will succeed me in this parish, whenever it may please the Divine Providence to terminate my connection with it, will depend entirely on the corporation, who, you may be well assured, will jealously watch over the exercise of every right and privilege which the provincial statute accords to them. I earnestly hope that your vaticinations as to the nature of our future prospects may not be realized. I pray most sincerely that when the hand which pens these words shall have been mouldering in its kindred dust, God will raise up some devoted minister of His word and sacraments to serve and teach in the truth the people of this parish. And I trust that the day is far distant when Churchmen in Nova Scotia will permit a self-supporting mission to remain vacant. In a few years the parish of Wilmot in all probability will look to no source beyond its own borders for support to its rector; that support even at this time promising to be such as would at no very distant day satisfy the wants of a man of moderate views and expectations.

The argument on which you insist in order to induce us to contribute more liberally towards the funds of the

Diocesan Church Society, will produce in this parish an effect the very reverse of that which you wish and intend. For charitable contributions are not generally demanded under the contingency of any kind of threat. And if we yielded to such an argument in the remotest degree, we should be in the condition of a subject people, acknowledging your right to tax us at your own will and pleasure,—a privilege or right which I am very sure the Churchmen of the diocese will not accord to any bishop, much less to one not elected by themselves.

However, I exceedingly regret that you have forced us into a position which has the appearance of being in some respects antagonistic to that Society whose praise is in all the churches ; because I claim to have been, of all the clergymen in British North America, the very first to suggest and advocate the establishment of Diocesan Church Societies. And I rejoice exceedingly that under Divine Providence they have been everywhere productive of so much good to the interests of the Church and the cause of religious truth. May they long be instrumental in promoting and upholding the knowledge that maketh wise unto salvation !

Yet, be pleased to remember that this parish solemnly protested against the Synod,—a protest which you refused to receive, although presented by me, the rector. You now tell us that the Synod is established, and we infer that all the missionary work of the Church must now and henceforth be under the direction of or in connection with synodical episcopacy. Can you in reason or justice ask us authoritatively to contribute to the promotion of a system against which we have protested ? Or can you deny that in withholding further contributions we are acting in perfect consistency with the position into which we are forced ?

I use the word *forced* deliberately. For this parish has to complain that up to this hour we have not received words of encouragement or kindly advice from our

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bishop. Your addresses to us at your confirmation visits have been invariably of an oburgatory character. And in 1861 you committed, in your anxiety to find fault, the strange anomaly of scolding the wrong congregation. You actually blamed the Lawrencetown people for the architectural deficiencies of the parish church, with which in reality they had nothing to do, and which was built before most of them were born.

The truth is, you fail to appreciate the real character of the churchmanship of this people. Their views are highly conservative; and I am not aware of anything in their proceedings that seems to militate against this idea. And what, after all, have they done? They strongly deprecated any change in that system of faith and discipline which they love, and which has been handed down to them by their fathers. They refused to elect delegates to the Synod, although they well understood that such a measure would increase the power of the laity. And their most earnest desire has always been to preserve intact the spirit and machinery of our venerable church government. And I submit to any impartial observer that this line of action is more conformable to the spirit of episcopacy than that which you have introduced and are forcing upon their notice. You are endeavoring to obliterate ancient landmarks: they wish to retain them. You have ignored the rights and privileges of your clergy: they are anxious that these rights should be respected and preserved. You are spending your energies on the supererogatory work of introducing amongst us episcopal presbyterianism or presbyterian episcopacy: they wish to preserve protestant episcopacy in its fullness and integrity. You desire to establish novel tests of churchmanship, and to convert the rules of a voluntary association into arbitrary enactments: they desire to abide by the well understood principles of their Church, and to enjoy that scriptural liberty with which they are made free. In this view of

the case, therefore, you are the very last man in Nova Scotia who has a right to challenge their position, or to question their orthodoxy. Well and truly may they apply to you that scriptural saying: "Cast the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull the mote out of thy brother's eye."

Now I would, in conclusion, submit it to any man of ordinary comprehension, either in or out of our communion, to decide whether your course of action or that of my parishioners is the more conformable to that system of faith and discipline which are placed in the keeping of our Church, and whose Great Head is the same yesterday, to-day and forever?

The composition of this letter, be assured, has been to me an irksome task, which I undertook with great reluctance. But I felt that its publication had become a matter of necessity, in order to vindicate the present position of my parish before my reverend brethren and the churchmen of the diocese at large.

And I remain,

Right Revd. Sir,

Yours faithfully,

J. R.

NOTE.—The works which have been consulted in the composition of the foregoing letter are these: Beverege's Apostolical Canons, 2 vols. folio, Gr. et Lat., Oxon. 1672; Eusebius Pamphilus, Socrates Scholasticus, and Evagrius Scholasticus, with Valesius' notes translated by Reading, Cantab. 1683; *Historia Ecclesiastica Theodoriti et Evagrii, item Philostorgii et Theodori Lectoris*, Gr. et Lat., fol., Parisiis 1673; *Socratis Scholastici et Hermiae Sozomeni Historia Ecclesiastica*, Gr. et Lat., fol., Parisiis 1668; Dupin's *History of the Church*, 4 vols., London 1713; Milman's *History of Christianity*, 8vo., London 1843; Stebbing's *History of the Christian Church*, 2 vols., Lon. 1833; Potter on *Church Government*, 8 vo., London 1724; Brett on *Church Government*, 8 vo., London 1710; Johnson's *Canons*, 2 vols., London 1720; Cave's *Primitive Christianity*, 2 vols., London 1623; Bingham's *Origines Eccles.*, 10 vols., London 1710; Hook's *Church Dictionary*, London 1854; Collier's *Ecclesiastical History*, 2 vols., fol., London 1714; Bp Sage's *Cyprianic Age*, 4to., London 1701; *History of Scotland*, by Sir Walter Scott, 2 vols., London 1833; Buchanan's *History of Scotland*, translated and continued by Aikman, 4 vols., Glasgow 1827; Dodwell on *Schism*, London 1683; Skinner's *Ecclesiastical History of Scotland*, 2 vols., London 1788; Slany's *Tracts on the Great Rebellion*, 4to., London 1641; Echard's *Ecclesiastical History of the Three First Centuries*, fol., Lon. 1719; and those mentioned in the context.

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